National Transportation Safety Board
PRELIMINARY REPORT
AVIATION

NTSB ID: WPR09MA159 Most Critical Injury: Fatal

Occurrence Date: 03/22/2009 Investigated By: NTSB

Location/Time

 Nearest City/Place
 State
 Zip Code
 Local Time
 Time Zone

 Butte
 MT
 59701
 1430
 MDT

Occurrence Type: Accident

Aircraft Information

Registration Number Aircraft Manufacturer Model/Series Number

N128CM PILATUS PC-12/45

Type of Aircraft: Airplane Amateur Built Aircraft? No

Injury Summary: Fatal 14 Serious Minor None

Revenue Sightseeing Flight: No Air Medical Transport Flight: No

Narrative

Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:

On March 22, 2009, at 1430 mountain daylight time, a Pilatus PC-12/45, N128CM, descended to ground impact near the approach end of runway 33 at the Bert Mooney Airport, Butte, Montana. The airplane was owned and operated by Eagle Capital Leasing, of Enterprise, Oregon, as a personal transportation flight under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91. The airplane was destroyed in the collision sequence and post crash fire. All 14 persons onboard the airplane were killed in the accident and there were no reported ground injuries. The flight departed Oroville, California, at 1210 Pacific daylight time on an instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan and clearance destined for Gallatin Field, Bozeman, Montana. The airplane was diverting to Butte at the time of the accident. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at both the Bozeman and Butte airports.

The airplane impacted the Holy Cross cemetery west of runway 33 at Bert Mooney Airport, Butte, Montana. The wreckage was confined to the impact area and consumed by impact and fire. Portions of all major structural components were identified.

Interviews with family members indicated that seven adults and seven children were traveling to Bozeman, Montana, to meet other family members and friends for a ski vacation. The owner of the airplane drove from California with his wife and other family members. The airplane originally departed Redlands, California, flew to Nut Tree Airport, Vacaville, California, where passengers were picked up. The pilot then flew to Oroville, California, where additional passengers were picked up.

According to a preliminary briefing from the FAA regarding air traffic control, the pilot filed an instrument flight rules flight plan from Oroville, California (KOVE) to Bozeman, Montana (KBZN) with Butte, Montana (KBTM) as the alternate. The airplane departed at 1210 local. At 1359 the crew contacted the Salt Lake City Center. At 1403, the airplane was at FL 250 and the pilot requested to change his destination to Butte and gave no reason for the diversion. He was cleared at pilot's discretion to descend to 14,000 feet, and at 1405 the pilot again requested to divert to Butte. At 1427 air traffic control asked the pilot if he had the airport in sight and the pilot indicated he had one more cloud to maneuver around. At 1428 the pilot reported the airport in sight and air traffic control terminated radar service. At 1429, air traffic control called the aircraft in the blind with no response. The accident was reported to local authorities at 1433.

Initial reports from ground witnesses indicate that the airplane was flying approximately 300 feet above ground level in a north-northwesterly direction. Shortly thereafter, the airplane's nose pitched to a nose-low attitude and it impacted the ground. One witness with aviation experience reported that the airplane was west of the runway centerline and appeared too high to land on the runway. The witness then saw the airplane bank to the left and fly farther west when it rolled, pitched down, and descended out of his view. Although there is no air traffic control tower at Butte, the local fixed base operator lineman was monitoring the radio as the airplane approached

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Narrative (Continued)

the airport. He heard the pilot transmit that he would be landing on runway 33.

Butte was reporting the following weather conditions at the time of the accident: at 1353 local, winds were from 320 degrees at 10 knots, visibility was 10 statute miles, clouds were 4,400 few, 8,000 overcast, temperature was 7 degrees C, dew point was -3 degrees C, altimeter was 29.57 inches of Mercury. At 1453 local, winds were from 300 degrees at 8 knots, visibility was 10 statute miles, clouds were broken at 6,500, temperature was 7 degrees C, dew point was -3 degrees C, altimeter was 29.56 inches of Mercury.

Bozeman was reporting the following weather conditions at 1356, approximately 3 minutes before the pilot requested to divert to Butte: the winds were from 290 degrees at 7 knots (240 variable to 320), visibility 10 statute miles, clear skies, temperature 14 degrees C, dew point -1 degree C, altimeter was 29.94 inches of Mercury.

All times reference mountain daylight time (mdt). Updated on Apr 1 2009 2:48PM

TRANSO
National Transportation Safety Board
PRELIMINARY REPORT
ÁVIATION

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PRE	LIMINARY REI	PORT	Occurrence Date: 03/22/2009									
	AVIATION		Occurrence Type: Accident									
Other Aircraft Involved												
Registration Number Aircraft Manufacturer						Model/Series Number				nber		
Acciden	Accident Information											
Aircraft D	amage: Destroyed		Accident Occurred During:									
Crew	N	Name					Certificate No.			Injury		
Pilot	On File					Fata			atal			
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
Operator Information												
Name Ope Eagle Cap Leasing, Inc.					Operator Designator Code D				Doing Business As			
Street Address 203 E. Main Street				City Enterprise					State OR	Zip Code 97828		
-Type of Certificate(s) Held: None												
Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s):												
Operating Certificate: Operator Certificate:												
Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation												
Type of F	light Operations Conduc	ted: Personal										
Flight P	lan/Itinerary											
Type of F	Flight Plan Filed: IFR											
Last Departure Point						State Airport Identifier						
Oroville						CA	KOVI	≣				
Destination						State	Airport	Identifier				
Bozeman						MT	KBZN	J				
Weathe	r Information											
Investigator's Source:					Faci	lity ID: KBTN	Observation Time (Local): 1453					
Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Few 4400 Ft. AGL												
Lowest C	Lowest Ceiling: Overcast 8000 Ft. AGL				V	Visibility: 10 SM			Altim	neter: 3	30.00	"Hg
PRELIMINARY INFORMATION - SUBJECT TO CHANGE												

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PRELIMINARY REPORT				Occurrence Date: 03/22/2009					
AVIATION				urrence T					
Weather Information	(Co	ontinued from page 2)							
Temperature: 7 °C	De	ew Point: -	3 °C	Wind D	Vind Direction: 300				
Wind Speed: 8 Kts	S.	Gusts: K	ts.	Weathe	ther Conditions at Accident Site: Visual Co			nditions	
Administration Data									
Notification From						Date			
NTSB Comm center									
FAA District Office/Coordinator Federal Aviation Administration AAI-100 Eric West					Investigator-In-Charge (IIC)				
					Dennis J. Hogenson				
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